

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method, comprising:
sending power to at least one radio frequency (RF) identification (RFID) transponder (tag), including by;
a) ~~sending~~ sending power P_j for a first time interval t_j to the at least one tag at a first frequency f_j chosen from a list of N frequencies $f_1, f_2, f_{j+1}, \dots, f_N$; ~~and then~~
b) ~~sending~~ sending power P_{j+1} for a time interval t_{j+1} to the at least one tag at a second frequency f_{j+1} chosen from the list of N frequencies, wherein t_j and t_{j+1} are ~~substantially different~~ times intervals, and wherein the time between sending power P_j and P_{j+1} is less than a time t_0 in which the at least one tag loses a particular tag function if no power is sent to the tag.
2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein t_{j+1} is chosen to be long enough that all tags in operative communication with the base station at frequency f_{j+1} have ~~identified~~ identified themselves.
3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the sending of power P_{j+1} is stopped after ~~the~~ a time interval t_{j+1} when no further tags identify themselves.
4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein P_j and P_{j+1} are ~~substantially different~~ powers.
5. (Currently Amended) The method claim 4, wherein P_{j+1} is ~~substantially~~ reduced from P_j when t_j is too short a time for all tags in operative communication with the base station to have identified themselves.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein $|t_{j+1} - t_j| > 0.05 (t_j + t_{j+1})$.
7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein $|t_{j+1} - t_j| > 0.1 (t_j + t_{j+1})$.
8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein $|t_{j+1} - t_j| > 0.3 (t_j + t_{j+1})$.
9. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein P_j is a function of time.
10. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein P_j is a monotonically increasing function of time.
11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 10, wherein P_j is increased when no further tags identify themselves.[[.]]
12. (New) A method of frequency hopping, comprising:
sending a first power at a first frequency to a plurality of tags;
receiving responses from the plurality of tags; and
sending a second power at a second frequency to the plurality of tags when the time between received responses exceeds a response time.
13. (New) The method of claim 12, wherein the response time is less than a flag reset time t_0 of a tag of the plurality of tags.
14. (New) The method of claim 12, wherein the response time is less than a tag power down time.
15. (New) The method of claim 12, wherein the response time is less than 20 milliseconds.

16. (New) The method of claim 12, further comprising sending the second power at the second frequency to the plurality of tags when no response is received from the plurality of tags for the response time.

17. (New) The method of claim 12, further comprising sending the second power at the second frequency to the plurality of tags when a total time of sending the first power at the first frequency exceeds a protocol time limit t_{\max} .

18. (New) A RFID system, comprising:
at least a first antenna; and
a base station communicatively coupled to at least the first antenna and operable
to

send a first power at a first frequency to a plurality of tags,
receive responses from the plurality of tags, and
send a second power at a second frequency to the plurality of tags when
the time between received responses exceeds a response time.

19. (New) A RFID system, comprising:
a plurality of tags; and
a base station operable to send a first power at a first frequency to the plurality of tags, receive responses from the plurality of tags, and send a second power at a second frequency to the plurality of tags when the time between received responses exceeds a response time.

20. (New) The system of claim 19, wherein the base station is further operable to send the first power at the first frequency for a first time interval and send the second power at the second frequency for a second time interval, the first time interval being different than the second time interval.

21. (New) A RFID system, comprising:
means for sending a first power at a first frequency to a plurality of tags;
means for receiving responses from the plurality of tags; and
means for sending a second power at a second frequency to the plurality of tags
when the time between received responses exceeds a response time.

22. (New) The system of claim 21, further comprising:
means for sending the first power at the first frequency for a first time interval;
and
means for sending the second power at the second frequency for a second time
interval, wherein the first time interval is different than the second time interval.